

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. JIM McDERMOTT

OF WASHINGTON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 10, 2007

Mr. McDERMOTT. Madam Speaker, I was unable to vote on passage of the conference report on H.R. 2669. Were I able to, I would have voted "aye" on this important bill.

Furthermore, I was also unable to vote for final passage of H.R. 1908. Were I able, I would have voted "aye" on this legislation, noting that while the bill is not perfect, the Congress must continue to consider legislation to reform our patent laws. I look forward to considering a more refined product when this bill is next before the House.

PROGRESS IN IRAQ

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 10, 2007

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, the chief political expert and chief military expert for the U.S. before us in the FA committee. Despite the cynics, critics, and defeatists, who want there to be bad news, General Petraeus informed Congress that military progress is being made.

Our job is not over in Iraq. It is in the best interest of America to finish our mission. War is hard, but retreat and a unilateral withdrawal is a plan for another Vietnam failure. Abandonment is what our enemy wants but not what we will give them.

General Petraeus testified that substantial progress has been made by our forces and the Iraqi counterparts since the surge began in mid-June. According to the General, the security situation in Iraq is improving, while the Iraqi government continues to assume more responsibility in the political reconciliation of the country.

Despite the progress being made, nay-sayers continue to undermine the momentum that is building in Iraq for a peaceful reconciliation. Of course there is more work to be done before we can see real success in Iraq. In fact, that is exactly why we can't walk away from this war. Iraq has become the most foremost front in the war against radical Islam. The strategy of Islamic militants assumes an American withdrawal. They believe we will grow weary of fighting for liberty and freedom abroad and that we will walk away from our commitments in Iraq. If success in Iraq is the goal, nay-sayers have to understand that giving up is simply not an option. Withdrawal will only embolden our enemies. We've got to fight them where they are and show them that we mean business. This is the time for America to stand strong and stay focused on our mission. The whole world is watching us.

And that's just the way it is.

TRIBUTE TO DR. ROBERT C.
MESSINA, JR.**HON. JIM SAXTON**

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 10, 2007

Mr. SAXTON. Madam Speaker, I rise today in recognition of an extraordinary gentleman whom I have known personally for two decades. On September 15, 2007, Dr. Robert Messina, Jr. will be celebrated for his 20 years of Visionary Leadership at the Burlington County Community College in Mount Laurel, NJ.

Dr. Messina has been instrumental in the expansion of the Burlington County College community. While upgrading and constructing new buildings at the main campus in Pemberton, Dr. Messina saw an opportunity to truly push the College to the next level. He was steadfast in obtaining land for a brand-new, state-of-the-art second campus, located in Mount Laurel. The College and local community has enjoyed the use of six permanent buildings, including a corporate training facility and conference center, known as The Enterprise Center.

The College has expanded not only physically, but academically, as well. Dr. Messina implemented stimulating new programs that keep trend with today's industry demands. This new curriculum boasts Digital Media and Graphic Design, Biotechnology, Human Services, and several information technology certification programs that firmly cement Burlington County College as a leader in higher education for the twenty-first century.

To further reach out and benefit the surrounding Southern New Jersey community, Dr. Messina devotes his free time to the betterment of his neighbors. In the past, he has served on the national, regional, and local levels. He currently sits on the boards for the Deborah Heart & Lung Center, the Virtua Hospital Audit/Corporate Compliance Committee, and is a member of the Virtua Ambulatory Board. Nationally, Dr. Messina served two terms as the President of COMBASE, a Cooperative for the Advancement of Community-Based Postsecondary Education, and is a former board member of the American Association of Community Colleges.

Madam Speaker, Dr. Messina's infectious enthusiasm and abiding loyalty to his students is only surpassed by his genuine desire to embrace and enhance the community around him. As he celebrates 20 years of Visionary Leadership at Burlington County College, I would like to extend my sincere gratitude for his leadership, commitment, and service.

RECOGNIZING THE 75TH ANNIVERSARY
OF THE CITY OF BLOOMFIELD HILLS, MICHIGAN**HON. JOE KNOLLENBERG**

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 10, 2007

Mr. KNOLLENBERG. Madam Speaker, I want to recognize the City of Bloomfield Hills, in Oakland County, Michigan which is celebrating its 75th anniversary on September 16, 2007. This city's rolling hills and beautiful gar-

dens show why it continues to rank among Michigan's loveliest communities.

Bloomfield Hills celebrates its 75th anniversary simultaneously with the 200th anniversary of Woodward Avenue, the nation's oldest byway. The two are inextricably linked because as Woodward developed, city dwellers were able to travel north of Detroit to enjoy fresh air and relaxed country living.

Originally a densely wooded wilderness inhabited by Native Americans, the Village of Bloomfield Hills grew from pastoral farms and orchards into the Estate Era, where men of vision and high ideals like, George Booth, bought huge parcels of land for summer retreats. Known by many names, including Bagley's Corners, Circle City, and Bloomfield Centre, the Village of Bloomfield Hills officially became a city in 1932 upon adoption of its City Charter.

George Booth envisioned elaborate plans for the acreage he acquired in 1904, designing a church and school for the benefit of the community. The jewel of his imagination, the Cranbrook Educational Community, a nationally acclaimed educational, scientific, and artistic complex, is on of Bloomfield Hills' most notable and unique treasures. Thousands visit the historical campus each year, enjoying the Cranbrook Academy of Art and the Cranbrook Institute of Science.

Madam Speaker, today Bloomfield Hills is a vibrant community in Oakland County that is home to over 4,000 residents, a preeminent graduate school of art, and Michigan's largest natural history museum. I congratulate them on their 75th anniversary and wish the residents many more years of prosperity.

A TRIBUTE TO DIANE BEEDLE

HON. JANICE D. SCHAKOWSKY

OF ILLINOIS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, September 10, 2007

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise today to bid farewell to one of the most creative, competent, caring and clever Hill staffers, my Legislative Director, Diane Beedle. For four years, Diane has moved a legislative agenda that addresses issues as diverse as the safety of children's products, outsourcing of American jobs, immigrant rights, data security and identity theft, new telecommunications technologies, private military contracts, ending horse slaughter, auto safety, energy independence, expanding health care, preventing cancer, and ending the war in Iraq. She prepared me for all of the many hearings in the Energy and Commerce Committee including, of course, the priority sporting hearings—boxing, steroids, and college bowl games, and far more.

As if that weren't enough, Diane was responsible for identifying and securing funding for projects important to the 9th Congressional District of Illinois. There is less flooding, better law enforcement, improved transportation, and better services for vulnerable people because of Diane's work. How does she do it all? As Kim, our office manager and executive assistant/scheduler said, "She rose to the challenges and opportunities that the LD position offered, and she is very organized and methodical as well as being a very positive and nurturing presence in the office."